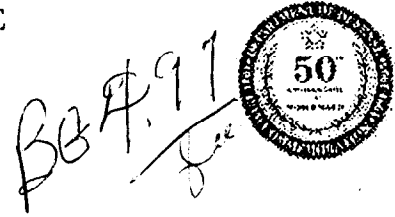




## DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

WASHINGTON, DC



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

23 SEP 1996

## CONTRACTING POLICY MEMO 96-C-08

## MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM-FOA-DRU (CONTRACTING)

FROM: SAF/AQC  
 1060 Air Force Pentagon  
 Washington DC, 20330-1060

SUBJECT: Source Selection Decision Memorandum (SSDM)

Recent experience with source selections indicates that the current AFFARS Appendices AA and BB guidance on SSDM content requires clarification. This is needed to ensure that the SSDM captures and fully documents the integrated decision of the Source Selection Authority (SSA), and is not just a reiteration of the assessment results on a proposal-by-proposal basis. Consequently, SAF/AQ has directed that we provide additional guidance on SSDM content to consistently apply this approach across all Air Force source selections. This memorandum applies to Air Force personnel serving as the SSA, and those responsible for drafting the SSDM, in competitions conducted under AFFARS Appendices AA and BB.

The SSDM must reflect the SSA's integrated assessment (including a cost/technical trade-off, if one is needed) and decision. Specifically, the document should be written in the first person, when appropriate; i.e., "I have concluded, I have decided...", etc. The discussion of each area should identify the discriminators and provide comparative assessments where appropriate. Use concise paragraphs. There must be a logical flow from one paragraph or conclusion to the next. Additionally, ~~the SSDM must compare elements of the most competitive offers against each other~~ e.g., "I have decided Contractor A's approach to factor... was better than [Contractor B's][all other offerors] because Contractor A proposed/discussed/resolved/ identified/planned/had/possesses ...." **The SSDM must stand alone to support the SSA's decision. Therefore, all pertinent information, including necessary proprietary information, must be included in the SSDM.**

Ensure that the source selection decision is consistent with the evaluation criteria and that each conclusion or decision in the SSDM is directly linked to the stated evaluation criteria. It is also important to be specific about strengths and weaknesses, their significance to the program and their relationship to the conclusion or decision made.

The SSDM should contain source selection information to the extent it is pertinent to the decision. ~~For example, at debriefings we must disclose the relative rankings of the offers to the extent established.~~ The SSDM should contain and support those rankings. ~~Where there is clearly an offeror second in line for award, the SSDM should identify that offeror even if there was no distinct ranking of all the other offers. Usually, the decision comes down to a serious debate between the relative merit of two or three offers,~~

Atch 96-15G (AFFARS Appendix BB) See second page for posting instructions.

and the SSDM should reflect this debate. \*

The SSDM is fully releasable to the General Accounting Office and others authorized to receive proprietary and source selection information. Be sure to ~~redact the proprietary and source selection information when releasing a copy of the SSDM to offerors or to anyone not authorized to receive proprietary and source selection information.~~ The need to redact such information is not a sufficient or correct reason to refrain from preparing a properly written SSDM.

In summary, there is no one right way to document a source selection decision. The key is to first select the best proposal based on the evaluation criteria in the solicitation and then to explain in writing why the SSA selected that proposal. The SSDM must be a single document supporting selection of the best proposal consistent with the stated evaluation criteria. It is important to understand that the current SSDM formats at Atch 9 of AFFARS Appendices AA and BB are for example only and should not be considered as fill-in-the-blanks standard formats.

This memorandum is superseded once this guidance is incorporated into the AFFARS. If you have any questions or need additional information, contact Lt Col Ken Truesdale, SAF/AQCP, DSN 227-9544, E-mail: [truesdak@af.pentagon.mil](mailto:truesdak@af.pentagon.mil), or Mr. Ron Poussard, SAF/AQCS, DSN 225-1997, E-mail: [poussard@af.pentagon.mil](mailto:poussard@af.pentagon.mil).

*//signed//*

TIMOTHY P. MALISHENKO, Brig Gen, USAF  
Deputy Assistant Secretary (Contracting)  
Assistant Secretary (Acquisition)

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Atch 96-15G (AFFARS Apprndix BB) Post to AFFARS Appendix AA, para AA-316 and AFFARS Appendix BB, para BB-315 and Atch BB-9 by circling the references and annotating in the margins: "See 70-41, atch 96-15G." Then file this atch behind AFFARS Appendix BB.